

Wycombe may have to settle for third spot

THE Blues brave championship is over, and now, it seems they may have to settle for third place.

The dramatic events which ended Wycombe's interest in lifting the Berger Isthmian League title came in two stages.

Firstly, while Wanderers were dropping two points with a 1-1 draw at Leatherhead on Saturday, their two main rivals Slough and Enfield were improving their positions with fine victories.

Then on Tuesday night came the mortal blow. Slough won 3-2 at home to Trophy finalists Sutton United to move out of Wycombe's reach — four points clear with only one game left.

But Enfield kept in touch with a 2-0 success at Carshalton and can still depart to the Alliance League next season as Isthmian champions.

All now depends on the last game for these clubs. Enfield must win at home to bottom club Woking tomorrow (Saturday) — a not unreasonable chance — if they are to pip Slough.

Out of medals

But if Slough win at Sutton next Thursday, then nobody can touch them. If they draw and Enfield win, then the title would be decided on goal difference. This would go to Enfield provided they defeat Woking by more than two goals.

All this leaves Wycombe

likely to finish third — just out of the medals, unless Enfield lose to Woking, and the Blues win at Bromley tomorrow.

Manager Mike Keen is philosophical about Wycombe's position. "During the past few weeks I knew we could not afford to slip up and still maintain a challenge.

"Still I'm disappointed that we are not going to finish in the top two. Since New Year's Day, we've had a fair run with only two defeats. The only away game we lost was at Enfield.

"After our poor start to the season (they were 21st at the beginning of September), we've done quite well to be where we are," he said.

Mr Keen also refuted suggestions that Wycombe's failure to win the title, affected their chances of a successful bid to join the Football League.

"I think the League will take into account our record over the past ten years, rather than just this season — and that's pretty good. In any case, the first thing is to get our ground approved.

"I would like to see us join the league, because I believe we could sustain better gates than some present Fourth Division clubs. But it won't come overnight. "If it does we're all in for a lot of hard work."

Mead released

Mr Keen is not renewing Keith Mead's contract, although he has asked him to stay on and help the youngsters in the Reserves.

"Keith has done ever so well for us this year. But I don't see him as a first team player next season, although he might have a few games. At the moment he is thinking it over."

So Mead, 35, seems set to make his last senior team appearance at Bromley tomorrow, when Mr Keen may field the same side that drew at Leatherhead. The one change could see Jimmy Jacobs come in for Simon Dexter at full-back.

Jock honoured by the players

VIV Busby and Peter Sudaby who made their names with Football League clubs, are just two of a large gathering of former Wycombe Wanderers players, who will be attending the Esso Motel in Maidenhead tomorrow to honour the club's loyal groundsman Jock Sheppard.

More than 120 people will pay tribute to Jock, who has served the club as trainer and groundsman for a total of 23 years. Before that he was a player.

This is by no means a retirement party for Jock who has at least a couple of years to go.

The special dinner is the

brainchild of current mid-field player Howard Kennedy, who explained the reasons behind the idea.

"I felt that Jock thoroughly deserved a tribute from the club, and decided to do it now, because I might not be at the club for many more years."

Among the famous Wycombe names attending the dinner are Larry Pritchard, Alan Phillips, Len Worley, Tony Horseman and Charlie Gale. The main speakers will be John Delaney, Keith Mead and John Maskell.

Kenny Swain, the Aston Villa star, had originally agreed to attend, but has since had to change his plans as he hopes to be celebrating the League championship in London tomorrow evening.

BERGER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slough	41	22	13	6	71	33	79
Enfield	41	22	11	8	78	42	77
Wycombe	41	22	9	10	74	46	75
Leytonstone	42	19	12	11	78	57	69
Sutton	39	18	11	10	79	62	65
Hendon	42	18	10	14	66	58	64
Dagenham	41	17	11	13	79	65	62
Harrow	41	16	10	15	56	51	58
Hayes	40	16	8	16	40	48	56
Staines	42	15	9	18	60	61	54
Bromley	41	15	9	17	60	67	54
Tooting	42	15	8	19	49	53	53
Hitchin	41	15	9	17	64	61	52
Dulwich	42	13	12	17	62	67	51
*Barking	42	13	12	17	58	72	49
Croydon	40	11	15	14	48	48	48
Harlow	41	11	15	15	53	63	48
Leatherhead	41	11	14	16	35	50	47
Carshalton	40	13	7	20	53	80	46
Walthamstow	40	13	7	20	47	75	46
Boreham Wood	41	10	12	19	45	68	42
Woking	41	11	7	23	39	67	37

* 2 points deducted, † 3 points deducted.